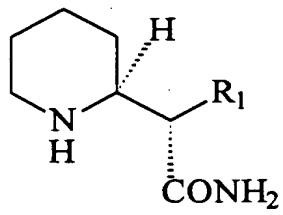
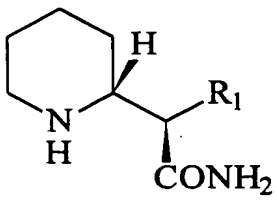
WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A synthetic process comprising the steps of:

providing *d,l-threo* piperidyl acetamide stereoisomers having formulas:



l-threo



d-threo

wherein R_1 is aryl having about 6 to about 28 carbon atoms; and

reacting said stereoisomers with an acid resolving agent in an organic solvent, thereby forming acid salts of said *d-threo* stereoisomers preferentially with respect to said *l-threo* stereoisomers.

2. The process of claim 1 wherein R_1 phenyl.

3. The process of claim 1 wherein said solvent comprises an alcohol, an alkyl alkanoate, a ketone, or an ether.

4. The process of claim 1 wherein said solvent is an alkyl alcohol having 1 to about 5 carbon atoms.

5. The process of claim 1 wherein said alkyl alcohol is isopropanol.

6. The process of claim 1 wherein said acid resolving agent is a derivative of D-tartaric acid.

7. The process of claim 1 wherein said acid resolving agent is a tartaric acid derivative having formula $HO_2CCH[OC(O)R_3]CH[OC(O)R_3]CO_2H$ wherein each R_3, independently, is aryl having 6 to about 28 carbon atoms or aralkyl having 7 to about 28 carbon atoms.

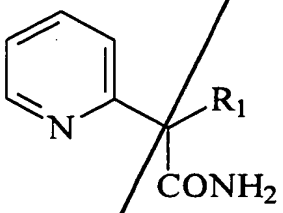
8. The process of claim 7 wherein R_3 is aralkyl having 7 to about 28 carbon atoms.

9. The process of claim 6 wherein said acid resolving agent is dibenzoyl-D-tartaric acid.

10. The process of claim 1 further comprising reacting said *d-threo* acid salts with aqueous base to form said *d-threo* piperidine acetamide.

11. The process of claim 10 further comprising reacting said *d-threo* piperidine acetamide with an alcohol having 1 to about 5 carbon atoms in the presence of acid to form a *d-threo* piperidine acetate.

12. The process of claim 1 wherein said *d,l-threo* piperidyl acetamide stereoisomers are prepared by reacting a pyridine having formula:



with hydrogen in an alkanoic acid having 1 to about 10 carbon atoms in the presence of a catalyst to provide a mixture of *threo* and *erythro* piperidyl stereoisomers; and

contacting said *erythro* stereoisomers with organic base, thereby converting said *erythro* piperidyl stereoisomers to *threo* piperidyl stereoisomers.

13. The product of the process of claim 1.

~~14. The product of the process of claim 10.~~